



AN ANALYSIS OF FASHION INDUSTRY SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES AND INDIVIDUAL AWARENESS

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ABSTRACT

Sustainability has enhanced a conspicuous issue across various areas, specifically in the fashion industry, that considerably provides to global dirtiness. The swift growth of fast fashion and connected to the internet buying has severed garment transfer, infuriating environmental damage, accompanying the clothing industry giving reason for approximately 20% of worldwide contamination. Despite a increasing adoption of tenable practices, contamination rates continue to rise faster than sustainability works. Major fashion brands and influencers are more and more putting on reducing their element footprints and advancing sustainable substitutes, to a degree plant-eating leathers and recycled matters. In India, notable pushes are being undertaken to merge sustainability into fabric result, although challenges wait. A survey transported among young person's tells an increasing awareness and enthusiasm to support tenable fashion, though actual giving on tenable crop remains restricted. The verdicts suggest that while services interest in sustainability is extreme, skilled is a gap betwixt knowledge and operation. Increased education and approachable reusing options manage improve the impact of tenable practices. Overall, achieving important progress in sustainability will demand a collective work from things, brands, and commerce's alike.

Keywords: *Sustainability, Fashion Industries, Individuals, Awareness*

1. INTRODUCTION

The most celebrated topic in all sorts of field is sustainability. The demand for it is increasing day by day, due to the increased pollution caused by the industries. But this angle of demand is created by the individuals, as they are the major consumers of the product. The ideology of fashion is witnessing a dramatic evolution in recent decades. However, instant online shopping and growth of fast fashion says more about the consumers interaction with the clothing styles. Trends are spreading rapidly and the garment disposing is increasing which heightened the pollution of the environment. As the garment industry contributes about the 20% of pollution. Though the sustainable practices adoption is increasing day by day, the amount of pollution is increasing more than that. Fashion brands and influencers play a major role in the shift towards sustainability. Prominent brands like Burberry, Gucci and much more are contributing in the reduction of carbon foot prints. In India, some notable initiatives have been taken which is appreciable. This introduction gives the deeper exploration of the sustainability challenges in the textile industry, the role of consumer behaviour and ongoing processes of brands and industries to address the issues.

2. NEED OF SUSTAINABILITY

There is an increased demand in textile industry. This is due to the fashion ideology that is been adopted by most of the population. In those days, it will take around minimum of seven to eight months for the popularity of the trends among the individuals. The mode of transport and the availability of social media was also not that much possible. Due to which, it took much time to adopt the trend by massive population. The culture of disposing the clothes was not appreciable in those days. As the value of the product is given much importance and throwing of fabric was not in peoples mind. But due to fast fashion and the fast door delivery system through applications and websites, the adoption of fashion became so easy. This way the dumping of garments also increased. These resulted in the land pollution. The degrading time of natural fibres is fast comparatively to the man-made fibres. But due to the need of some special purpose finishes in the garments for everyday use, the utilizing of natural fibres has been decreased with the increased use of synthetic fibres.

3.COMPARATIVE PERCENTAGE OF TEXTILE INDUSTRY AND SUSTAINABILITY TEXTILES:

The textile industry contributes around 4% in trading¹ and the contribution to sustainability is around 4.3%². But the percentage of pollution created by the textile industry is around 20% worldwide³(Figure 1). As we can see the percentage of pollution is in more numbers than the economy contribution. The numbers are increasing towards sustainability in recent years but the pollution rate increases ten times faster than it. The preference for the importance of sustainability is around 69% according to the Vogue readers. The 73% of the British consumers are having the habit of buying only sustainable clothes⁴, while in India its around 56% in buying⁵. In China, the industries that has been producing synthetic dyes was shut down and are trying to find new technologies that can save water and reduce pollution⁶. In India, the pre-treatment process has been modified to some extent and the awareness campaigns among the individuals have been conducted. Although, the adopting mindset is different from preference. Everyone is voting for the sustainable importance, but when it comes to adoption, the percentage is always less in number. The life span of a garment is from five to six years before 2012. After it, the fast fashion started to conquer the people's mind slowly and moving in a rapid way nowadays. The increase in working people plays one of the major roles in the fast fashion. As everyone needs to look pleasant in their working atmosphere.

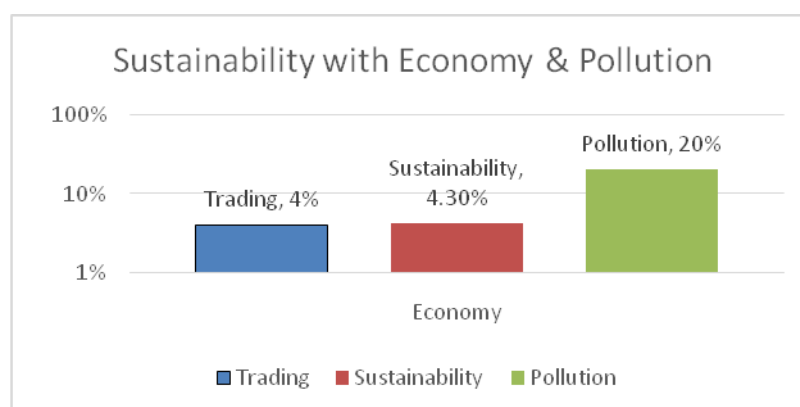


Figure 1: Sustainability in Economy & Pollution



4. INITIATIVES BY FASHION BRANDS AND THE INFLUENCERS:

The concept of fashion is introduced to the world by several fashionista and it's becoming a never-ending ideology. The people get attracted to the fashion is due to the standards fixed by them. The period where the clothes are just enough to cover the body has been changed to the importance for defining personality. This helped in the growth of fashion and pollution simultaneously. Natural color for dyeing is not that much appreciated, as they are dull than the synthetic colors. Same applies to fibres where synthetic is preferred based on the economy and utility purpose. These concepts can be changed in the people's mind only by the fashion influencers. As the people are getting attracted to it partly by these influencers who are the cinema stars, Youtubers, Instagram etc. If most of the influencers, create their content based on sustainability, definitely it would bring some sort of changes in the mindset of the people. Many fashion brands have started adopting to sustainability. The brands like Burberry, Gucci are concentrating on reducing carbon foot prints up to 90% by 2040. Chanel brand concentrates on the climatic conditions, Vivienne Westwood is focusing on responsible sourcing and regenerative agriculture, Stella Mc Cartney, Hermes and Yves Saint Laurent is concentrating on producing vegan leathers instead of animal leathers. Prada is gaining attention on the mission of Re- Nylon⁷. Even though the initiatives by the fashion brands are much stronger, the carbon footprint reduction is at its pace. The more conscious the individuals become; more beneficiaries will be there for the environment.

5. INDIAN INDUSTRIES TAKE ON SUSTAINABILITY:

Our Indian textile industry is one of the largest exporters of goods in the world. Especially the t-shirts manufactured in Tirupur are the best exporters in India. Though the market is good, the concept of sustainability is quite a challenge one. Our Indian textile industries has initiated some of the sustainable production methods. The SDF Clothing is one of the leading industries in the area of sustainable and ethical production of textiles. They have introduced a technique for the color matching systems in the textile industry in a sustainable way, which is free to use⁶. RSWM limited company has started to blend more of natural fibres like hemp, flax, nettle, ramie, banana and jute with recycled polyester, modal, cotton to produce sustainability and performance yarns⁸. Nowadays the most consumed clothing is denim. This requires huge amount of water in the production stage which is more of water consumption and polluting the environment. Many industries came forward and started to work on producing denims in a sustainable way. One of such industry collaboration is anthropologie with Cotton Incorporated as an initiative for recycling the denims⁹. Epson and HKRITA collaborated on the development of the new fibers using upgraded technologies. They have initiated the programme to separate the fibers from the challenging textiles and converting it into newer one⁹.

6. URVEY ON THE CUSTOMER PREFERENCES:

A survey was conducted between the age groups 18 to 25 with 86% female respondents and 13% male respondents on the concept of sustainability preferences. This survey was taken with 100 students. The results were discussed further. The buying habit of clothes too often was found at the rate of 33% whereas the occasional buying is around 17% (Figure 2).

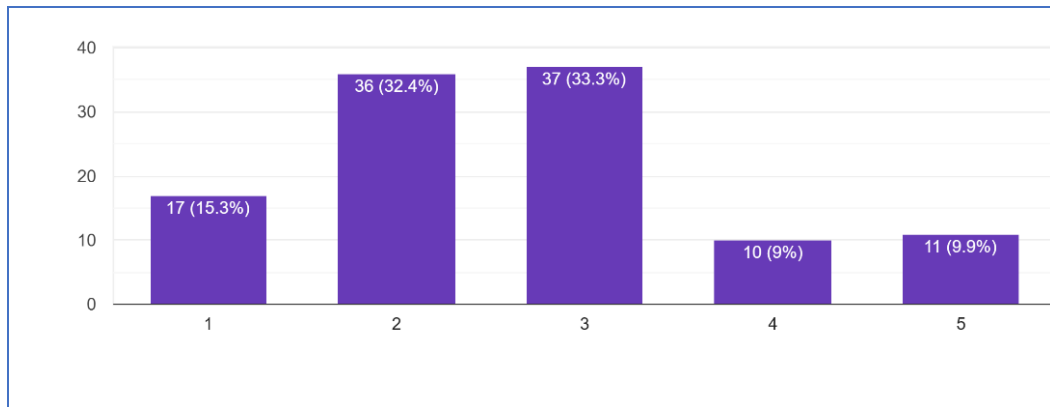


Figure 2: often buying habits of clothes

The percentage preference for Natural and Blended fibres are more or less 45% and the preference for synthetic is 10% (Figure 4). The knowledge about sustainability (Figure 3) among the individuals is 65%. Around 67% people are willing to buy sustainable clothes and 26 % voted that they may prefer it (Figure 5).

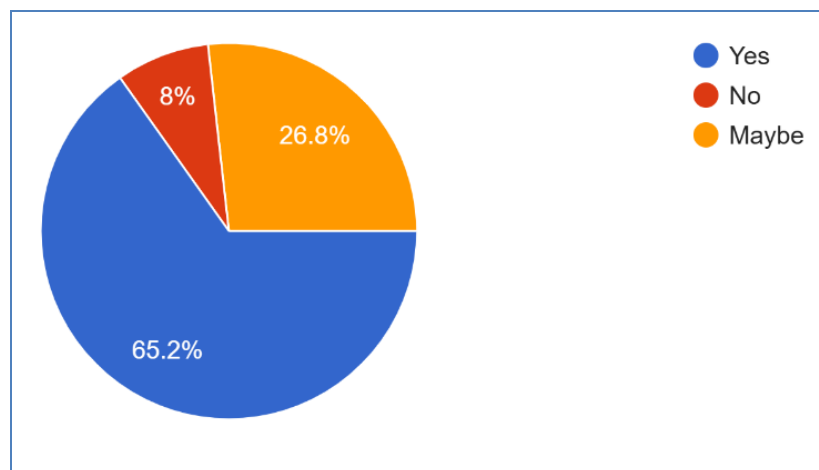


Figure 3: Knowledge on sustainability

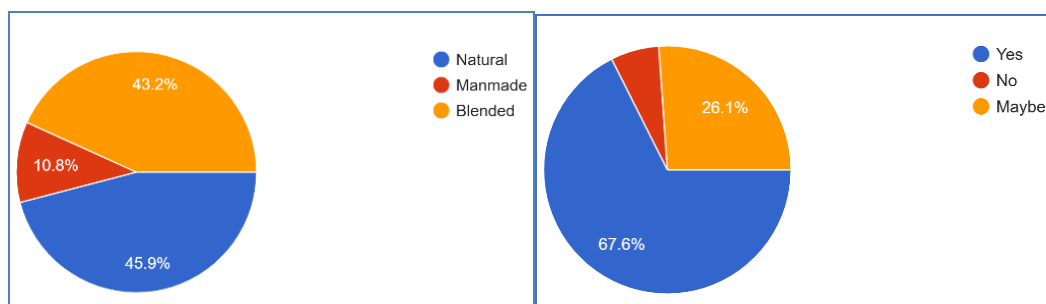


Figure 4: Preference on fibres

Figure 5: Preference on sustainability

The percentage of recycling the clothes among 100 members is 42% but the number may vary. The donating of clothes is seen to be moderate with 36% and 20% answered very often (Figure 6).

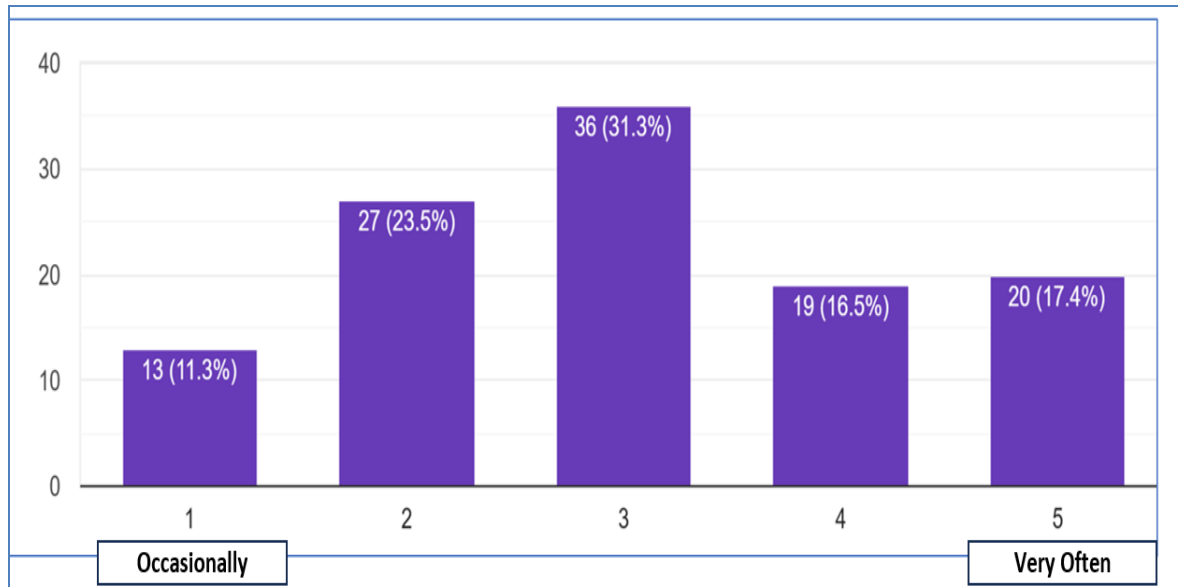


Figure 6: Donation of clothes frequency

The individuals interested in spending amount for sustainability between the range of Rs. 500 to Rs.1000 is 41% which is higher and the maximum spending amount preference does not exceed above Rs.2000 as it lies within the range of 27% (Figure 7). The highest count of 78% has been seen for the preference of both brands and local markets with the 40% Indowestern outfits and 37% western outfits (Figure 8). The preference for traditional outfit seems to be low in percentage (Figure 9).

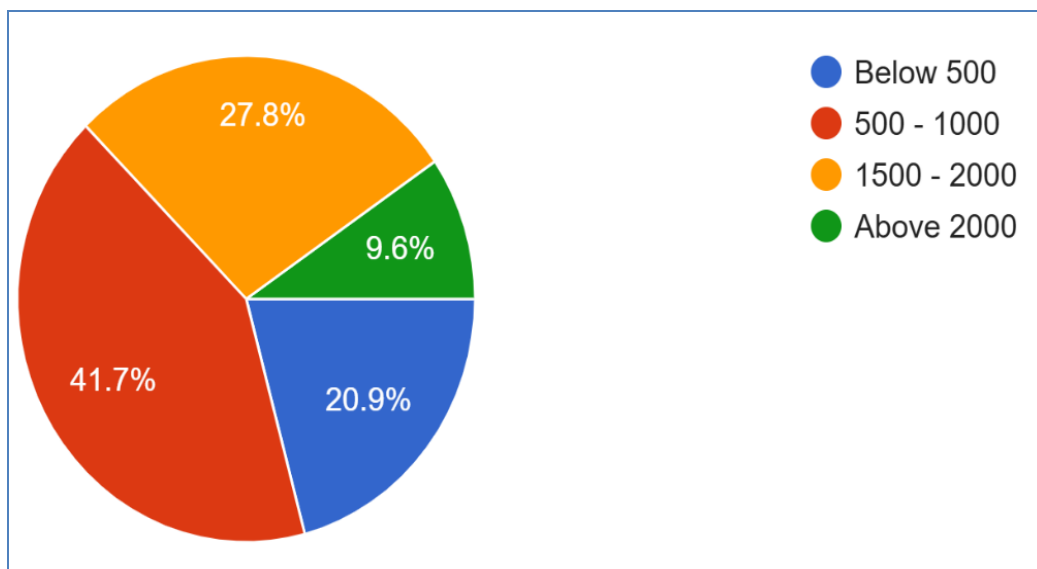


Figure 7: Amount spending preference on sustainable textiles

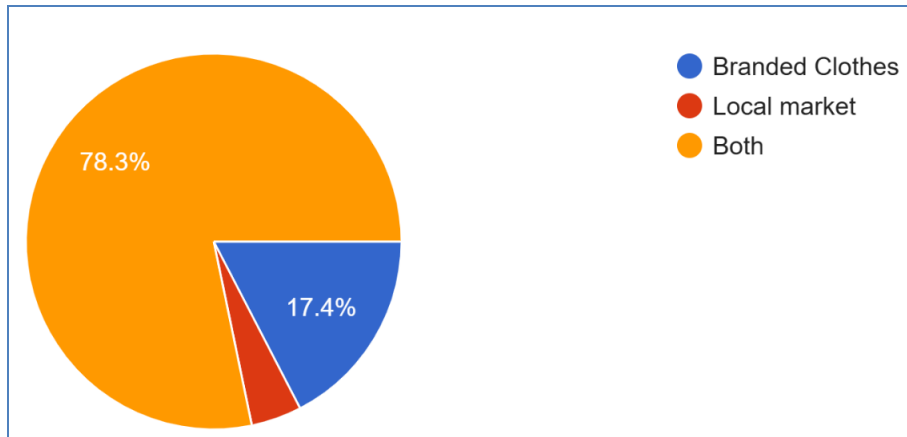


Figure 8: Preference on Brands and Local markets

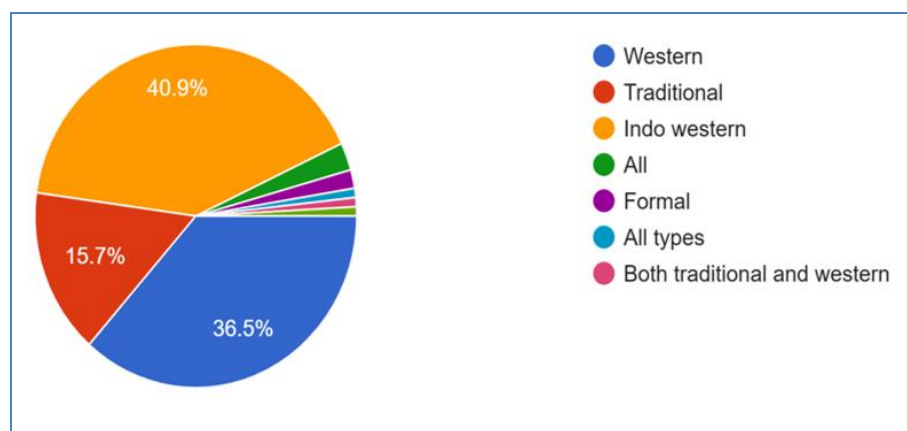


Figure 9: Clothing style preferences

7. CONCLUSION

Thus, from the survey, it is understandable that the customers are willing to buy sustainable products but the amount they are willing to spend is not that much. It's acceptable as some of the individual's financial stability is not that much. The textile industries also concentrating much on its production in a sustainable way. But in this fast-moving world, it is seen that the sustainable methods are moving slow. This has to be increased by preaching it to as many individuals as possible and increasing more online applications for donating the clothes. In this way, we may contribute some percentage of sustainability to the environment. This is not only the work of industries or fashion brands, it's the responsibility for each and every individual. If the mindset of the person can be changed with craft, sustainability can be achieved in a short span of time.

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